

Little Memories

by silently-abandoned

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Summary: After being kicked out of the Lifestream, the remnants of Sephiroth decide to blend in society despite their efforts to destroy the very thing they hated. Yazoo lives off of money wherever he can get it, Loz for a certain Turk, and Kadaj... Just gets stranded in the middle of nowhere. (Will be M later on)

1. I

_Hey guys! So this is my first Final Fantasy fanfiction so if there is any mistakes in timeline and anything else like typos please tell me. Reviews keep me going! I would love it if you let me know how it is. _

_The main pairing in this story is Cloud/Kadaj. Reno/Yazoo and Rude/Loz is confirmed and hints of Genesis/Sephiroth will be shown later. _

I will be crossing over Final Fantasy games such as VIII, X, and XIII. It will be VERY VERY subtle (except for X) so don't get butthurt. I am still thinking about Kingdom Hearts so.

_This is following a theory by wordmage/kittenfair on tumblr where Sephiroth bases the remnants off of Angeal, Genesis and himself.

_

Oh and yes there will be sex. Because come on. You can't live without hardcore gay smut.

_DISCLAIMER: FINAL FANTASY AND ITS COMPONENTS DO NOT BELONG TO ME THEY BELONG TO SQUARE ENIX. _

Enjoy!

* * *

><p>"I thought I would feel better afterwards. I don't."<p>

The silver haired young man stared emptily past the dusty terrain where bugs and animals infested the place. The dry cracked earth was screaming for water to be fed, something from the planets to give it life again.

It was funny how a year could change him.

A year stuck inside an endless river where he could hear the souls whispering to one another.

A year where he lived in harmony with his brothers without a fight.

A year where the oh so merciful goddess was entertained with keeping them company.

It's been a year.

And nothing changed.

"Well at least you did something, huh? You showed 'em traitors who's in charge."

The man with fiery red hair spit out a cancer stick he held in his mouth. His cerulean blue eyes glanced up at him and he sighed.

"But I'm just guessin' you don't care about that, yo? Usually you don't."

Reno accepted Yazoo's silence for a brief second, his feet kicking against the sand. He cracked his back as he sat on his bike, the solemn stance of the remnant still staring at the terrain.

"What about that money, yo?"

The reminder he practically spat out finally made the still remnant move, his head cocking up to the side.

"Shinra can wait."

"He's not good at that."

The clone gave an exasperated sigh. He turned around and lightly brushed Reno off his bike, sitting perfectly on top. The redhead climbed in behind him.

"When are you getting your own bike anyway? You know how to fly, bleed, mend your own wounds, how come you don't drive?"

Yazoo cocked the engine to his motorbike, pleased by it coming to life. He heard the redhead chuckle lightly behind him.

"Cause whenever I get a car, usually they looks ugly as hell after two months. I like other people's ride, at least their's is shiny."

He fastened his hold around Yazoo's waist and gasped when he sped up down the sandy terrain.

"Never gonna get used to that, yo."

* * *

><p>All he could feel was sand.<p>

Pure, dusty, obnoxious sand everywhere.

He couldn't feel the soft embrace he'd come to love, the warm feeling of nurturing happiness. That was all he was accustomed to feeling, especially when there wasn't anyone around.

Kadaj sat up and spat on the ground, quickly irritated with the grains of sand on his face. He instinctively squeezed his eyes shut and scowled, shaking his head to get the remaining particles out. He stood up on his feet, falling back down but picked himself up quickly.

He was confused, his mind was fuzzy as the desert landscape practically shook underneath his feet. He wobbled, his feet sinking underneath the ground.

How his bike rode comfortably here before, he had no idea.

The ground broke as he fell through, nearly tripping. Besides the unpredictable ground he was walking on, the air was stale and dry, the sun practically smacking him with blistering rays.

It was one of those things where he wanted to look up but if he did, the menacing star would burn out his eyes.

It was one of those things where he could feel his lips drying rapidly, crackling under the harsh rays.

It was one of those things where despite hating being pushed in the water, it was something he craved more than ever.

But the question still revolved around his mind.

Where was Mother?

Kadaj grunted and he clenched his fists, frustrated tears pooling in his eyes.

Where's Mother?

He sniffed and immediately wiped his tears, scowling. He wasn't going to give up yet, he wasn't Loz.

There was only sand. Sand everywhere, sand in his eyes, sand in his shoes, sand in his pants, sand everywhere.

But wasn't he in _heaven?_

With Mother?

The last thing he remembered was a soft voice calling down from the heavens, a pale small hand caressing his cheeks. Cloud was over him, that was, and yet from his stance he could hear light gasps above. He

could even feel a droplet of water tickle his cheeks.

Was he crying?

_No, Big Brother doesn't cry. _

The silver haired remnant couldn't take the lasers bashing down on him anymore, he wasn't used to things like this.

He was used to the stench of unwashed bodies roaming around in the streets, poor men begging on their knees for money, the slow people shuffling around trying to get through the day.

Not rays of light that wanted to crack his skin open, sand that invaded his body and a low hiss resounding in his ears.

"Mother?"

He called out, his dry throat cracking painfully.

"Mother?"

He hated being like this, he hated having to call out, he wasn't a damn _child _anymore.

"Mother!"

All of his strength fell through that one call, screaming past the arid air that seemed to clog his ears and nose.

His knees buckled under his feet, weak from the pressuring atmosphere. He could feel the air constricting him, wrapping its fingers around his damp neck and wringing his frail frame.

"Mother.."

The last piece of air from his lungs was stolen away, collapsing around the soft, searing sand.

Kadaj could care less if the sand opened up and ate him, it would be better than getting kicked out of the Lifestream, left to fend for himself.

Does Gaia love playing gamesâ€¦|

* * *

><p>About an hour passed before he was startled awake yet again by a little foot.<p>

Kadaj wrinkled his nose and narrowed his mako green eyes at the black figure he spoke some language he couldn't understand - or maybe even hear - and clenched his fists.

"Leave meâ€¦| Alone!"

He growled, trying to abruptly sit up but fell down due to loss of energy. Eventually he regained his footing and wobbled on his own two

feet, mumbling. His death stare hadn't let up though.

The man seemed to understand and rose two hands, covered in gloves. Now that Kadaaj could see him clearly, his whole body was covered up, save for his shoulders, which was exposed between torn gauze. His face was wrapped around in bandages, gray goggles placed where the eyes should be. The language he was speaking was something slang, curved with every word.

"What are you still doing here? Leave!"

Even though he tried to be menacing, his pale dry skin was threatening to crack and bleeding split lip was caked in sand. His leather outfit was torn and dried, tearing at the shoulders down.

He wasn't going far in this.

When the man spoke something in another language, something he couldn't understand, he scowled and reached down to his hips to try and get _Souba. _

Nothing there.

He looked down in a panic, his eyes wide with surprise before darting back up at the man, burning with anger.

"Did you just _rob _me?!"

The man seemed to jump back in surprise at the shout, even Kadaaj was amazed that he could pull it out of himself.

"Well?!"

The man shook his head, bucking his hips forward and slightly spun as if saying he didn't have anything to give to him.

Still though, the teen snarled and hadn't let up his menacing posture despite being shorter.

"Get out of my sight. _Now." _

The bundled up man spoke up, again with the jumbled up nonsense as he took a step forward.

Big mistake.

The remnant suddenly rushed forward, his hand clamping around the man's neck tightly. With every word dripped in poison, his nails dug into the rags.

"You have only a few seconds before I twist my wrist and snap whatever bone you have in you. Understand?"

If the man didn't understand what he meant by leaving him alone before, now he knew.

He fell down, immediately tripping and ran away, sand flying around underneath his feet.

Now that Kadaaj just had himself, he began to regret chasing him

away.

What if he had food and water on him?

Well now that doesn't matter now, does it?

The remnant shakily began walking away again, running his fingers through his silver shoulder length hair so whatever sand got trapped in there, he brushed out.

He let his feet carry him on, footsteps slowly disappearing under sand as he wandered.

Wandered where exactly, he had no idea.

His mind wandered far off, his hair smacking him in the face.

"Yazoo?"

He called out, his voice weak again due to lack of water.

"Loz?"

Most importantly, where was Mother?

His brothers weren't anywhere at all, the bikes they rode in wasn't visible.

What _year _was it?

Did he even awaken at the right place as last time?

Obviously not, it was a rock hard crater he woke up from, not a damn _desert._

"Yazoo?!"

Kadaj called out again, this time louder than before.

And this time he knew no one wasn't going to listen.

I'm coldâ€|

Kadaj wrapped his arms around his legs, shivering in the bitter cold.

He still didn't come across anything, no water, no food, nothing.

The only chance of survival was with that strange man he woke up too.

Why didn't he follow himâ€|

The remnant's teeth clattered, his skin practically freezing.

How could a harsh landscape outside produce freezing nights like these?

The worst was when the wind blew, it seemed to try and knock the life out of you.

"Motherâ€¦"

He muttered under his breath, the name stuck on his lips.

It wouldn't matter how long he'd still be left out in the cold, he knew Mother always protected her children.

But where was she?

Just now a name stumbled past his lips, one he hardly ever spoke of.

"Sephithâ€¦"

He hardly ever recalled saying that name before, except when he was overlooking Midgar with Shinra. That was the only time he ever spoke His name, the only time it ever mattered.

He crumbled up beside two sticks and a bunch of rags he tied together around him, enough to warm him up at night.

"M-Moâ€¦"

He started to say but couldn't, his voice caught in his throat. His lip quivered as he suddenly remembered his fight with Cloud, the man hesitant to kill him. Even in his mind he wanted the pain to be over, he never landed the last blow.

Pleaseâ€¦

He couldn't help it this time, his eyes filled with tears thinking about them, thinking about Loz and his stupid tough facade even though it never worked, Yazoo and his quiet, soothing voice and his long hair which he always wanted to braid.

Cloud, despite how much he hated the man and how he made his heart _ache_, he couldn't help but wish for his presence now.

It was better than being buried alive in this horrid_ sand._

He missed them all.

Somebodyâ€¦

Tears fell down his cheeks, staining the ground underneath. He tried to push them back but that was worse. He coughed, his dry throat scratching itself, almost bleeding.

Mother...

He couldn't stop them from falling, the dam of his emotions let loose.

He kept them buried, he stuffed them all away in his head so he wouldn't think about them, wouldn't acknowledge them. He'd do anything to never face them all, the monsters he locked away in his

head.

Mother usually kept them back. She bolted them shut with a lock and key.

Now she was gone.

He didn't know _what_ to live for.

What was so important that he couldn't find Mother anymore?

What was so _important_ that he was thrown out of the lifestream?

Didn't he bring back Sephiroth like Mother wanted?

Wasn't he _done?_

"Mother!"

He called again to no avail, his desperate cries to hear her voice again, just _one more timeâ€¦|_

"Mother!"

He didn't bother wiping his tears or cleaning the sand off his clothes, he just didn't care anymore.

All he wanted was to leave and never return.

Kadaj shut his eyes and could feel his muscles failing him, could feel the hunger subside and the thirst not matter anymore. He shut his eyes and hoped that woman would come down and reunite him with his brothers, with Cloud, with Motherâ€¦|

What he didn't notice was two beady black eyes watching him from behind a cactus, whispering something incoherent and nothing important.

* * *

><p>Read and review please!

2. II

**DISCLAIMER: Final Fantasy does not belong to me, it belongs to SQUARE ENIX. If it was my way, I would bring back the gay twink from Crisis Core.**

**We all know who that is.**

* * *

><p>"Cloud, this isn't funny!"<p>

The young girl's voice rang in the speakers, sounding like she was pouting from the other side.

"Marlene please, can you give the phone to Tifa? I understand I

haven't called in a long time but this is very important."

The blonde huffed against the speaker, almost feeling guilty himself for not calling or talking to them in a very long time.

"Fine but you're coming back again, right?"

"Marlene-"

"_Please?_"

His heart throbbed in his chest at the sound of her voice, more than it was already.

"Yesâ€¦ I promise."

He didn't know how many times he made that promise already but it hurt_ each time he made it.

"Okayâ€¦ Fine. Tifa!"

The girl's voice was distant, yet he could hear Denzel laughing and playing with another girl.

Oh how happy it must've been for the both of them.

"Cloud?"

His heart skipped a beat, almost bursting out of his chest at the sound of her voice.

"Hey."

Damn it Cloud, why can't you just say something else? You don't call for months, and now you finally say something and all you can say is 'hey'?

"How have you been?"

He could tell something was off in her voice, not the usual happy voice she greeted him with in the voicemails.

"Well. I've been well.."

Again, another lie.

"You sure about that?"

Of course Tifa would know what's going on. She could read him when no one else could.

"Tifa, it's been a long time, I know but I'm coming back soon-"

"Don't give me that."

She snapped suddenly, making the blonde flinch on the other side.

"What Cloud, you don't call for six months, you don't send a note or something and now you finally reappear? What's going on?"

Cloud winced at the sound of her voice. He figured she would've gotten used to him almost never showing up or calling to let her know he was alright but he never put into thought she was _done _with it.

Cloud vanished on murmurous occasions, her birthday, living in Midgar, the fact she was able to take care of the kids like a mother, like she _was _their mother.

And he knew how important a mother was to a child.

"I'm sorry, Tifa. I can't get you into what I'm doing, I can't bring you and the kids into this."

"But are you _alright_?"

The blonde was honestly surprised at this.

He expected a scream, a remark full of spite or a tired 'okay' in response.

But all he got was _concern_.

He broke too many promises towards her, too many of the kid's promises, too many of his own promises, and now all he got was _concern._

One of the most important people in his life was _worried_ about him, not the usual one where she demanded him to know how location and when he'll be coming back but how she actually _worried _about his safety, even though Cloud mostly got it himself.

Even though he saved the world more times than he could count, he was still a human being - for the most part. One bullet or one swipe of the sword and he's gone. Forever.

And that was the thing that bothered him.

"I will be, I promise. To you and the kids."

He cleared his throat and felt the high winds pick up, knowing the sandstorm was merciless, claiming all of her unfortunate victims.

"I gotta go now. See ya."

He hung up, Tifa's weak 'see you later' being cut off.

* * *

><p>Kadaj didn't know where he ended up.<p>

All he wanted was a quick death from a scoundrel's sword or a slow death from thirst and hunger but now he was shaken up and thrown down again, back into the same old world.

Why can't you just let me die?

He sat up and rubbed his eyes, grains of sand trapped underneath his fingertips. It took a while for the light to pass through but eventually it did, clearing up his image.

_What the-__

Colors leaked through the torn curtains of the tent, light slipping through holes. Sticks were hung up tightly in the fabric, keeping it formidable in the sand.

It was hot, humid, but it was significantly cooler inside the shade, that he was thankful for. Shadows blanketed his head, making whatever light that threatened to touch him keep him safe.

Medical supplies littered the tent, bags and clothes that were too colorful for his taste was hung up against hooks that stuck out from the sticks.

The most odd thing however, was why there was a _robot _next to him.

And it was a live, beeping, and fully functioning _robot._

It was shaped like a person but wider, hollow thin tubes jutting out from the stomach connecting to the backpack-like object on his back.

It seemed to stand there and just _stare_, it's head tilted to the side as if he was waiting for the teenager to talk.

"Uhâ€¦ Hello?"

The robot sprung to life, beeping away as it wobbled out of the tent as if to notify someone the teenager was awake.

Which left the confused and rapidly growing bored teen buried in rags and a _quilt_. A heavy blanket in a _desert_ out of all the places it was supposed to stay in.

Kadaj brushed his bangs to the side, his green eyes peering into a clear bag with water glistening and bouncing around.

"Waterâ€¦!"

He rasped, practically falling on his knees to open the bag and gulp it all down, droplets escaping past his lips.

Oh, how I've missed this.

What he wouldn't _kill _to be pushed in a lake right now.

"Like it, kid?"

An elderly woman's voice was heard behind him, startling the boy to dropping the bag, water spilling past his fingers onto his knees.

"No!"

"Don't worry, we just had chocobos come in with barrels of

water."

The old woman crossed her arms and smiled, wrinkles creasing on the side of her eyes. She wasn't like the women who walked feebly, her knees cracking under her due to dead weight and clothes but different, way different than what he'd seen.

Smile lines were permanently etched onto the side of her lips, her livid green eyes still lit up with joy and a hunger for adventure despite her years. She was tall, taller than Kadaaj - then again who wasn't - with sun kissed skin. Dots littered the side of her forehead but she concealed it with a Persian blue bandana which was tied firmly around her forehead.

Her clothes were oriented with charms and almost everything Kadaaj thought of, rabbit's feet hung off her belt and light blue and yellow feathers - which he guessed was from chocobos - strung off her legs. Her white hair was braided in knots, almost forming a crown around her firm temple. Of course it was completed with two white buns, feathers dropping out of them.

Kadaaj was amazed people in this world even lasted long, much less be _happy_.

"Rightâ€¦| Excuse me if I don't like introductions but I'll be going now."

The silver haired teen tried to push past the elderly woman but she blocked the way.

Who does she _think_ she is_?

"Excuse me lady but I've got to be somewhere-"

"Please, stay for a while."

Kadaaj froze and narrowed his eyes at the woman, crossing his thin arms together.

Who was she to say that he should _stay_? He didn't want to stay, he wanted to find Mother, not get stranded in the middle of a desert where food and water was a rare fortune.

"Oh please, I think I'm just fine. Now move or else you'll regret ever bringing me here."

He finalized that point, his lips curled in a snarl and the tips of his words etched with poison.

Maybe _that_ will make her scared, put some fear in those old bones, make her know her place.

But there was nothing but a chuckle, her green eyes glinted with something close to excitement.

"A bit of an adventurer, aren't you? Didn't your momma tell you to respect your elders?"

Something inside Kadaaj snapped. His mako green eyes flared, his face immediately reddened with anger.

How _dare _she talk about Mother like that?

Doesn't she know how _long_ he wanted to reunite with her?

Does she even _know _how without his Mother he couldn't be _complete_?

Does she even know the _pain _he had to _endure _each and every day without hearing her voice?

Just one moreâ€¦|

He lashed out without thinking twice about it. His fist raised in the air before he could stop himself.

A surge of sea green mist blew from his arm, energy spiking through his body. His mako eyes lit up, black slits dilating to engulf his eyes. The corner of his mouth turned up into an evil smirk.

His arm came down, a snicker escaping past his lips.

Maybe this will show her who's in charge-

The silver haired remnant froze, astonished. He couldn't say a single word, his green eyes wide.

What the-

The woman caught his fist in mid-air.

Mid-air.

Kadaj scrambled away, falling on the bed. The old woman's face scrunched up into a small grin.

"Think you can play me, kid?"

The woman laughed louder this time, her voice cackling, being heard from outside of the tent.

"I haven't fought in such a long time! Especially with that kind of magic, what was that?"

The remnant's voice caught in his throat, his green cat-like eyes blown wide.

"What? Cat got your tongue?"

She snickered at her own joke, pointing at Kadaj's eyes.

"Ah fine, I'll let up. Meet me outside when you can, cat."

She turned around and didn't even bother trying to protect herself, lifting up the colorful fabric. Sunlight poured in and Kadaj actually hoped for once the day would just fall into nighttime.

"Kadaj."

The woman lifted a white eyebrow and turned around.

"What?"

"My name is Kadaaj."

The teen looked up, his green eyes suddenly dull. It should've stunned the woman that the teen's mood changed so quick but it didn't.

There was a time where this was all she ever saw.

The elderly lady's smile turned up again, this time calming down the long term feelings of animosity in the boy.

"Rikku. Get some rest, hm?"

Kadaaj tore away his gaze and nodded, bringing up the blanket to hide from her.

The clash of beads falling on warm sand was the only thing he heard before slipping into unconsciousness.

* * *

><p>A loud thump stunned the tall Turk for a brief second, the pen falling out of his hands.<p>

There was a bloody _bag_ on his desk.

Tseng's honey brown eyes stared at the bag for a moment, then back at the taller Remnant, then back at the bag.

"W-What is-"

"I got the job done. Where's the money?"

Yazoo stood on one foot, his stoic green eyes locked on Tseng's stunned ones.

"W-Where the money always is, why ask-"

"Reno said that you had extras if I bring the head. An extra 2000 Gil, to be exact."

Tseng's jaw slacked open for a second before shutting. He tried to talk again but shut his mouth again.

"Renoâ€¦ Saidâ€¦"

His hand rubbed his temples, staying quiet for a second. He sat there, his head in his hands as he tried to calm down.

Calm down.

He was losing his normally stoic composure, he just knew it.

He didn't know why he wasn't used to this type, he was used to skinning people and torturing them - ironic since the man that taught him that was right in front of him. With a bloody bag. - but he wasn't used to _heads_.

He always got a shiver when he saw people's heads on spikes, which was unusual from a Wutainese. When he was a child, the village he lived in was right near Wutai and the small village was used for numerous things: prostitution, narcotics, execution and slave trade. Tseng was a very handsome man, built and somehow different from all the other men in the village. Women drooled over him, men were jealous and even though he hardly ever spoke, he was already popular.

In a both good and bad way.

His family was political, often involved with the leaders at that time. Tseng guessed they were head of council, but he only guessed. He never knew which side his family was in until the War.

His uncle was caught sharing information to Shinra because he claimed the nation was failing anyway. Only Wutai cared about was it's capital, nothing more. His village was suffering mainly because the leader kept all the money to himself.

But once the neighbor ratted his uncle out, his family was shamed by the authorities and as a result, his uncle and wife were executed. Their heads were placed on the pike outside of his house.

Everyday the boy looked out the window and came face to face with the back of his uncle's head.

Calm down.

Tseng recalled once he was going to school and saw a man carry his wife's head on a spike. Apparently the woman drowned her three young children because she couldn't afford taking care of them anymore and her husband caught her before she could drown the last one, an infant.

_Calm down. _

The most scarring of all was when he bumped into one of the spikes and the head came crashing down on his temple, causing the young boy to fall over and come face to face with it.

It's dead beading eyes peering into his soul, the mouth hung open revealing the insides picked out by crows.

Calm down.

Since then the Wutainese was paranoid with severed heads, averting his gaze when faced with one.

"So do you have the gil or not?"

Yazoo's voice snapped him back to reality, where he stuttered before practically ripping the drawers open, trying to find the bags of coins he stored for the newly turned bounty hunter.

_How _he got the remnant to take the job as a bounty hunter for the Turks was beyond his knowledge. Maybe it had something to do with ensuring Loz's safety into the Turks first before he could go.

Loz did have an oddâ€¦ Fascination with Reno's partner after all.

"Here, just get the thing off my desk first."

Yazoo cocked an eyebrow before picking up the bag, the crimson red liquid staining the hardwood desk and floor.

"I think this is the first time I've ever seen you so uncomfortable. You're a Turk, aren't you supposed to be used to this kind of stuff?"

Tseng shot a look at Yazoo before dropping the bag into his awaiting hand.

"Depends on the Turk."

He swallowed thickly, taking a few soft tissues out of the drawer and wiped down the desk. He looked up once more at the long haired man, catching his smirk which was a silent 'thank you'. He noticed he was also carry a lanyard with bloody ID tags.

"You should give the ID tags to Rufus, just drop it in his office. He'll be glad that the rebel leader is taken care of."

He sniffed, hearing the door slam shut in the cold room.

Tseng rubbed his eyes, groaning.

"Only Sephiroth, I swear."

* * *

><p>Read and review please!

3. III

DISCLAIMER: go back to the first page.

_I might start doing two sections from now on. Just to make things short. _

Enjoy!

* * *

><p>"Hear my heartbeat? Just focus on that, okay?"<p>

Rude carried a limp and injured Loz down the stairs, his heartbeat racing in his chest. Blood stained his suit fast and it certainly wasn't his.

They took a mission that Shinra left behind on his desk, so to Tseng it was perfectly fine. The president didn't mention anything that could go wrong, it was just a sweep job where all they had to do was get in and get out.

Apparently it wasn't as simple as it looked.

The target they were following had a bomb strapped to his chest, the detonator in a building opposite from them. The job was just to get information but it took a wrong turn fast.

"Wha?"

The dim green lights in the remnant's eyes were clueless, his hands clenching tightly around his collar.

"Can you hear me, Loz?"

Rude wondered if the bomb blew out Loz's eardrums since he was close to it after all.

Too close.

"I can't hear youâ€¦"

Blood trickled down his ears, Loz unable to hear anything. He couldn't even hear Rude's deep voice, the only thing that could give him _something_ to hold onto.

"Rude?"

He tried again but nothing. He couldn't even hear his own voice.

The bald man kicked open the side of the building door and practically ran down the alleyway, sitting him down on the bench.

The Turk figured it was useless answering him since he couldn't hear him anyways and flipped open his phone, calling Reno.

He better pick up this time.

Yazoo was completely out of the list of people to call for. Once the remnant came and saw his brother's condition, he'd skin him alive and not even bother with Loz until later.

Reno, where the hell are you?

He'd better not be in the strip club near 7th Heaven, just sitting there and cheering on the woman that threw their panties in the audience.

Then again Yazoo practically banned him from going in recently, probably because of the remnant's conflicted feelings.

"...Rudy?"

The weak voice snapped him back to reality. His slick hair was falling, framing his soft squared face perfectly. The blonch on his suit jacket expanding. His hand was stained with the sinful essence, the coppery stench lingering up to Rude's nose.

_He could die here and you're just gonna watch him slowly lose hope in you? _

_While you're dialing all of your numbers you have to get a ride,

he's still staring at you like a __**god**__._

He always saw you as a god.

Loz blinked. For a second, he thought that those eyes would shut forever.

Then he lost his chance.

_**Fuck **__this._

The bald man snapped his phone shut, bending over and touched the wound so his callous gloved hands were soaked. He pressed against the wound, Loz wincing in pain above him.

"Sorry."

He clenched around the bulkier remnant's hand, making sure the hand was clamping against the opening.

"Just hold on to that, okay?"

"It hurtsâ€|"

Tears filled up his eyes, threatening to fall down those once rosy cheeks that was paling dramatically.

"I know but you'll be fine, okay? I won't let anything hurt you."

He knew he was just spitting lies, all of the reassurance he gave him were all just lies.

Life as a Turk was just one near death experience to another, you were lucky if you didn't have bullets whizzing by your head for every mission you've been through.

It wasn't fair they had to recruit Loz, anything was better than _this_.

"Can you call Yazoo?"

The man sniffed, tears falling out of his precious green eyes.

"Yazoo's busy."

The look on his face was one he'll never forget. The look of a child abandoned by his parents, a child who just scraped his knee and had nobody to take care of him.

"I-If I don't make it-"

"Shut up, you'll make it. Just think about going to bed, hm? Sleeping in warm sheets and you don't get to wake up till eleven tomorrow, huh?"

He ripped the white suit jacket apart and opened a tiny box where he kept all the needles and strings. He plucked one out of the case and tied a loose thread around the tip.

"Do I get to sleep in your bed this time?"

The remnant almost cutely remarked, his eyes glimmering faintly but Rude could see something else in there, something he couldn't comprehend.

The darker man nodded, this time he smiled a little.

"You're always allowed in my bed, remember?"

He remembered the eldest remnant often complained about the guest bedroom in Rude's apartment, whether it was the rock hard bed or the blinds weren't good for blocking sunlight, to the point where he complained that the floors were 'too cold' in the morning. Colder than the tiled floor in the kitchen.

Eventually Rude gave up and let the man sleep in his bed but the deal was Loz wouldn't, under any circumstances, cuddle with him.

Somehow along the road the deal was broken and the Turk could care less.

"Yeah but sometimesâ€¦ Sometimesâ€¦"

His words trailed off suddenly, the soft voice quieting down.

"Loz?"

"I-I'm fine, justâ€¦"

The silver haired remnant coughed and he swore he accidentally spat blood on the bald man's forehead.

Nope, on his glasses.

"I-I'm sorry! I can't-"

"It's fine, you can't help it."

Rude's lips turned up in a smile, a rare chuckle coming from him.

Before Loz could comment on it, his phone rang loudly, splitting through the air.

Finally.

Rude pressed against the wound so nothing bled out and opened his phone.

"Reno, where the hell-"

"Reno can't come to the phone right now, is anything the matter?"

The Turk suddenly felt all of his blood freeze up at the sound of that sickening smooth voice.

* * *

><p>"Cloud's here, Cloud's here!"<p>

The little children skit across the floor, one falling face first in front of the other. The happy smile on their faces was one of the things that stuck on Cloud's mind, one of the things that forced him to keep going when all he wanted to do was _forget._

"Now, now, don't crowd over him! He's one man only!"

Tifa was wiping down the counter when he came in, her saucy but nurturing brown eyes focused on him.

The blonde struggled to pass through the front doors without knocking over a kid. He ruffled Denzel's hair and bent over to pull Marlene in his arms.

"Heyâ€| Miss me?"

They immediately nodded and hugged him so tightly around his neck, he struggled to get air in. He coughed and chuckled, standing up.

"You guys grew. Especially you Denzel, I thought Marlene was the one to give death hugs."

The little boy stuck his tongue out at Cloud. He did mature while he was gone, a few inches to his height but his body shrunk away the child's fat and replaced it with lean muscles.

"And you've grown too. I guess you gained back all that weight you lost dilly-dallying?"

Cloud had to smile at that, the woman knew just what to do to lift his spirits up.

"Yeah, I guess so."

It was hard enough hauling boxes and sleeping on _Fenrir_, he didn't want the evidence of his hardship showing _that _much.

"But I've noticed Denzel grew some. How'd you get it, kid?"

"Wellâ€|"

The little boy crossed his arms behind his back and looked away, his gaze traveling to Marlene.

Suddenly the look on both of their faces confused the man.

"Is there something I don't know about?"

What could they be _possibly _doing at this age? Denzel was a toothpick the last time I saw him, what caused him to be _this _mature?

Before Marlene could answer, Tifa spoke up before any of the two could answer.

"Barrett took him on a few missions out of town. Just a few menial

tasks, nothing serious."

That, was what struck the blonde.

"Missions? He let you go with him?"

"Yeah, he let me and Marlene go!"

Cloud looked at Tifa stunned.

"Didn't you think he would get hurt?"

"All he had to do was haul boxes Cloud, nothing happened."

Cloud opened his mouth and was about to answer but then his cellphone rang, piercing through their conversation.

Of course it was odd Cloud getting calls which didn't have his usual ringtone but it was _incredibly strange _for him to get calls from a private number.

This earned looks from everyone in the room, even Cloud down to his phone.

Of course Cloud couldn't just _leave_ it so he reached into his pocket and answered, swallowing thickly.

"Hello?"

"_Cloud Strife, is this you? Please tell me this is him, you don't know how awkward it would be if you aren't._"

A light female voice asked, almost nervously.

"Yeah, this is him. Who are you?"

Tifa stopped wiping down cups and leaned her weight against the counter.

"_Oh you haven't heard of me, I don't know why Tseng would make me out of all people to call you but my name is Elena. Do you know me?_"

Tseng?

"Yeah, I do."

The lady behind the phone gasped and spoke again, this time much more faster.

"_Oh good cause I was getting worried, you know, it's weird enough calling you, I mean you hate Shinra, I don't know why you would help-_"

"Just get to the point."

Marlene tilted her head to the side, almost cutely. Denzel just crossed his arms.

"_Well it has to do with that Sephiroth case months ago, I think you

remember that, right? Well uh one of them is back and we just kinda need helpâ€¦|_"

Something behind her voice indicated she knew more than that but Cloud didn't mention it. All he thought about was why Shinra wanted his help _again._

But Sephiroth?

"Not-what? Sephiroth?"

That prompted Tifa to lift up her head, a shocked expression on her face. The kids instantly paled, their legs quivered.

"_Yeah uhâ€¦| It's hard to explain. The president wants to see you at Healen Lodge, like last time."_

The blonde said nothing, just heard her blank words seep into his head.

"_Uhhâ€¦| You still there?"_

The awkward tone shook the ex-merc back to reality. He grunted and ended the call, already feeling Tifa's eyes bore into him.

"I've got something to do. I'm sorry-"

"Sephiroth's back?"

Marlene tugged on his black cape, prompting the man to look down at her.

Tears pooled around her brown eyes, her skin white with fear. He sniffed, instantly wiping her eyes and hugged around Cloud's leg.

"I don't want Sephiroth to come back! Send him back Cloud, send him back!"

Her voice squeaked, her body shaking.

"I know Marlene, I promise I'll send him-"

"But you have to kill him for real this time, please just send him back!"

She wept into his leg, staining his pants with tears. Denzel bent over and pulled her away, wrapping his arms around her waist.

"C'mon Marlene, he'll send him back! Cloud always saves the day, doesn't he?"

The little girl tilted her head up, wiping her nose.

"Yeahâ€¦| "

She weakly answered and shook again, another wave of tears coming.

"But what if he does something again, I don't want-"

Cloud patted her head, bending over and took the both of them in his arms.

"Hey, hey, I promise I'll keep you two safe. I'll keep all of you safe."

He really believed that. He had to.

"I promise."

He whispered. The little girl pulled away and nodded, hugging him tightly.

"Thank you, Cloud."

The blonde nodded and stood up, brushing the dust off his knees.

Tifa hadn't swept the place in a long time. Maybe the stress of Cloud being safe and the balance of the world constantly changing was weighing her down.

All he knew was that he felt the same way.

"I'll be back soon. Be safe Tifa."

He waved at her, the woman doing the same.

There was something different about her, the way her face instantly dropped when she saw him walking, the way she effortlessly waved, the way she just mumbled something under her breath when he left.

Maybe she was getting tired.

Cloud was getting tired too.

* * *

><p>"Stop! Leave me alone!"<p>

A little girl pushed against the man, her doll falling from her hands.

"Aw, a mooglee? That's cute, you're really cute, you know."

The middle aged man cornered the little girl against the wall, her sniffles heard from the other side.

"Leave me alone! Let me go!"

She tried to push past him but he was like an iron wall. He clenched his fist around her arm, pinning her on the wall.

"Now why would I do that? Girls like you are hard to find, especially ones that look like lambsâ€¦!"

His dirty hand touched her face, causing her to recoil in disgust.

"Help! Help me!"

She screamed until her mouth was covered by his hand.

"Don't scream and all this will be over soon. I expect you to be tight you know. I love girls like that."

He chuckled darkly, his beard scratching her face. The man struggled to untie his belt.

The little girl screamed against his hand, struggling. Tears stained her face, punching his shoulders. She closed her legs tightly, but the man somehow managed to spread them again.

"Oh you're the most beautiful-"

A glow appeared to his right and the man just had a split second before his body slumped to the floor. He groaned and tried to stand up, but felt a strong foot sharply force him down on the ground.

"Why you filthy-"

Before he could reach his knife, a black leathered boot crushed his hand in the pavement. Another sharp kick was delivered to his jaw.

"Quite ironic, isn't it? Filth compared to a dirt covered man. I prefer to use the term 'pitiful'."

_That voiceâ€| _

Another kick. This time it landed on his chest, knocking the air out of him.

The girl picked up her moogle doll and ran away, hiding behind a dumpster.

"Please don't-"

A foot collided with his face, his head forced to snapped up, catching a glimpse of long silver locks.

"An innocent little girl loses her innocence by a man who can't keep his desires at bay. Isn't his familiar?"

The man spat on the ground, trying to pick himself up but couldn't. The sharp heel dug into his lower back.

"Pleaseâ€|"

"You make me sick."

The man stepped on the back of his neck, slowly pressing down. Pain shot down his spine. He let out an agonizing scream, literally feeling his skull crush under his foot.

"P-Please, help meâ€| I'll do anything, please don't hurt meâ€|"

Suddenly he felt the foot alleviate, letting the man breathe. He

panted harshly into the ground, scrambling up so he could run.

"Thank you, thank you so much-"

What he didn't expect was staring down at the bottom of a barreled gun.

"No, no, please-"

He finally got a full frontal view of the man. Long silver hair cascaded down his back, white bangs covered his face. He thought he was staring at a woman but the lack of breasts distinguished himself from them. His green catlike eyes menacingly glowed down at him, his lips turned up in a smirk, then a sneer.

"Disgusting."

An ear splitting gunshot bounced the wall, stopping time for seconds before resuming, the fallout of sounds still heavy in the air.

The girl hugged her knees to her chest and whimpered, glancing behind her. She saw no one there and sniffled, picking herself up. She wobbled towards the trashcan and tried to find her shoe.

She would _never ever _leave the house without telling Tifa.

Denzel and her got into an argument over something stupid, something that she knew wasn't important and in a last minute decision she ran away.

Why did she do that?

Denzel must be worried _sick _about her. He actually did care for her like he did with Marlene but recently her chest filled with joy and happiness whenever he was around.

Why did she run away?

The girl lifted up bags, trying to find a white shoe that fell off her foot when the manâ€¦

The man. Where was he?

The girl just noticed he wasn't anywhere at all, not even a bloodstain was near.

Did that man kill him?

The girl knew she saw those silver locks somewhere but she knew it couldn't be _that _man.

She eventually tired and gave up, turning her back and was about to head home. She had another pair already.

"Is this your shoe?"

The smooth voice stunned her for a second, prompting her to whirl around.

She dropped her doll at the sight of _him. _The man that hurt Denzel.

He was just _standing there_ holding her shoe with one finger and resting his palm on his hip with another. His blank green eyes stared, cupid bow curved lips smirking.

"There's no need to be afraid, he's dead. I took care of him, see?"

He pointed to the dumpster next to the girl.

She noticed something hanging off the edge of the corner.

The girl bit her lip and shook with fear, approaching the dumpster.

White skin was tainted with sanguine liquid, drippingâ€|
Drippingâ€|

She gasped, falling backwards. She picked up her moogles toy, sprinting away. Anything was better than facing _him _again.

* * *

><p>Yazoo sighed and for the first time shown something on his usual blank face, something unpleasant bubbling in his chest.<p>

Why is she still afraid of me?

He was sorry for what he did to the children months ago, he was still reminded of their pitiful faces and their hope filled eyes.

If only Mother didn't ask me to do thatâ€|

But the thing was, Mother _didn't _ask him.

She asked Kadaaj.

And Kadaaj asked him. Well more like _ordered _him to do it but he digressed.

_Why did he even __**do**__ that?_

He had all the power in the world to say _no, _he was the same as Kadaaj, a puzzle piece.

A damn puzzle piece.

Yazoo snapped himself out of his thoughts, muttering something under his breath.

What was he supposed to do now?

He felt like this when he was abandoned in the lifestream.

One year ago and Mother still didn't take him back.

Loz and him didn't even have a minute to recover in there, they didn't even have a _second_ to see the woman that was cradling

Kadaj.

Just as they entered, they were kicked out.

Now what were we supposed to do?

Jenova was gone, Sephiroth was gone, Kadaj was gone.

What was the point?

It didn't help either that Reno still regarded him as Sephiroth, it didn't help that Shinra thought he was a ticking time bomb, about to explode.

I'm nothing like that monster.

Every damn time Yazoo stared in the mirror, he saw _Him_ looking back.

The way his silk locks fell over his shoulder, the way his green eyes seemed to glow. His slim figure was curved perfectly by the hips, his long creamy legs made any woman jealous.

Sometimes he thought that he was just created for sex.

Even Reno stared at his body too long. He swore he saw him bite his lip once.

But Reno was just interested in his body. Nothing more.

What am I worth anymore?

Am I just a joke?

The remnant kicked a rock, hearing it bounce off the brick wall and tumble away. At the sound of that, he was reminded of that lady who cradled Kadaj.

_How come __**she **__entered and stayed but I didn't?_

Yazoo swore he was going to find a way back and _stay_ but he just didn't know how.

And it all occurred to him that Yazoo knew _her_ name, the one Cloud loved. But he didn't know how. He didn't even recall meeting her except in the lifestream but that was just a second.

Who _is_ _Aerith?

How the hell do I even know her?

He felt like he met her once, touched her, knew what she smelled like, knew how her voice sounded. He knew that her hand fit perfectly in his, knew that she took showers twice a day, knew that she prayed a lot.

But _where?_

Yazoo sighed and put the shoe back in his pocket, turning around to head back home. His boots splashed puddles on the ground.

But first he needed to do somethingâ€¦|

* * *

><p>Read and review!

4. IV

**_DISCLAIMER: FINAL FANTASY AND ITS COMPONENTS DO NOT BELONG - I swear to god - TO ME._
>

* * *

><p>"Get yourself together, kid. The next sandstorm is coming."<p>

Rikku, the elderly lady that was in charge of this _camp_ that Kadaaj was stuck in, kicked his leg. The remnant popped a green eye open.

"Go away."

The stubborn boy wrapped an arm around a bundle of clothes, laying his head in the middle.

He knew that annoying girl - which was literally Yuffie standing in front of him - constantly tried to teach him out to use Materia but he knew enough.

"So you're gonna stay behind while sand just eats you all up?"

The elder carried a satchel full of tools and rations in one hand, almost like it was weighing it down. Her green eyes seemed to deepen in color, her facial expression one of fatigue laced with concern.

Why does she even care?

"I don't care."

His back was still turned to her, his lithe body bent over a wooden desk.

The woman sighed and lifted up the cloth, mumbling under her breath.

"Suit yourself."

After Kadaaj heard the familiar beads landing on the floor, he brushed silver strands out of his face, looking in her direction.

I just want to be left alone. Why does she even bother?

He didn't care if he sunk in quicksand, swallowed up by the earth as he choked on sand.

He didn't care if he was left alone in the tent and a bandit raid

swept by to take them all.

He didn't care if by some miracle Rikku kicked him out and he was forced to fend for himself.

In all honesty if Rikku gave him a sword to defend himself, he would just sink the blade into his chest.

Or if Rikku threw him out with no sword, no food, and no water, he would purposely starve himself. If it was possible for a remnant to die like that.

Brother killed me like he would kill anyone else, of course it's possible I'll starve to death.

"Hey Cat, at least throw some cover over yourself. Death by sand isn't exactly enjoyable."

Her permanent sarcastic voice seemed to seep into the tent, vaguely missing Kadaj.

"I'll take my chances."

He mumbled, shutting his eyes and just focused on the dense air that floated around him, the language of the children that he still didn't understand and the ever so constant presence of the woman outside of his tent.

Of course he should be out there looking for Mother but he had nothing to go out with. All of his powers he possessed before, all of the powers that Loz and Yazoo were jealous of were gone.

It was like Gaia threw him out clean, like she was throwing out a saint from heaven.

Although Kadaj was anything else but a saint.

"Isn't there anything that makes you happy?"

The elder walked in, spinning around threads around her wrist. For a second Kadaj wondered if it would snap her wrist.

"Not really."

Rikku rolled her eyes, letting out a big sigh.

"Kids these days- What about _machina_? Ever tried that?"

The youngest remnant thought for a bit. He brushed his smooth hair in front of his eye, sitting up.

"What's that?"

"You see those big machines outside? You get to learn how to operate and control them. Wanna try?"

Her voice contained something positive, something _hopeful_. It's like she wanted to lift him out of this depression and give him back the spitfire he possessed.

But still, how is that going to bring back Mother?

"Not interested."

He muttered. His fingers tightened around the bundle.

Just leave me alone.

"You gotta do something."

Even though Kadaj couldn't see, he could tell she had her hands on her hips.

"I am doing something. I'm not attacking you, which is a miracle."

Towards the end, he sneered.

"A miracle indeed. Tell me, didn't your momma ever tell you to be nice or something?"

What she didn't expect was a knife thrown at her direction which she dodged on instinct.

"_Don't talk about Mother!_"

Kadaj stood up, knocking the chair over.

"_If another word falls past your lips about her, I'll make sure you'll rot in the sand!_"

He shouted, his fists clenching by his side. His green eyes burned with rage, emotions threatening to spill over.

By now the elder could tell that before he landed here he went through harsh times but there was something _else_ buried under there, under all that rage.

Something so lost, so long agoâ€¦!"

"Your mother was a kind woman, wasn't she?"

Rikku crossed her arms, facial expression lax despite the raging psychotic brat in front of her.

"A kind woman to others. But I see how she raised you, how you were born to be. I see the hate inside of you, a natural born killer."

Kadaj had enough. He whipped out another knife and sped up to her, swinging his blade. A satisfying swipe down and all this is over.

But she was still standing.

Her firm grip around his wrist brought him back to reality, his menacing green eyes flaring.

"So what if I am-"

"I bet your mother was a saint to others but when she got home, she was the meanest demon you ever saw. I bet she beat you even when you tried so hard to make it right."

Kadaj lifted up a foot and pushed her back so hard, she fell against the curtain and nearly took it down.

He felt so _angry_, so _infuriated_ with this damn old hag_. _Mother was the thing that kept him alive all this time, Mother was the reason why he was sent back so he could try again.

How dare she open her mouth and say that?

"Shut up! Mother loved us all!"

He shouted, raising up a fist to slam her down. But, as usual, his fist was met with sand.

"Quick to defend are you, Cat? Did _she _defend _you _when you were knocked down? Beaten and bruised, starving out in the desert? Where was your momma then?"

She couldn't have said that, she couldn'tâ€|

The remnant swung the knife with whatever strength he had. Why was he so weak?

Rikku used this advantage to kick him in the abdomen, grabbed his wrist and twisted his arm. She pinned him to the cushion, pressing his arm painfully in his back.

"And you know what else I think?"

She sneered, squeezed around his wrist. Kadaj scowled and wiggled under her grasp, hating how his muscles were numb and feeling like there was thousands of tiny needles stabbing him in the legs.

Shut upâ€|

"I bet that there was someone else in the house that she loved more than you. I bet her gaze melted when she looked at them but when she looked at youâ€|"

Noâ€|

Kadaj's eyes shot open, his rage piling down to denial.

"_No that's not trueâ€|"_

Sephirothâ€|

Her serene voice whistled in his ears, picturing her pale arms holding him close to her bosom.

But then when she looked at _Kadajâ€|_

"Your mother was a saint in their eyes but in your eyes she was a perfect nightmare."

Noâ€|

Flashes of memories filled his head, the tranquility of her voice mocking him.

It was so unfair, it was just so _unfairâ€|_

"Stopâ€|"

All he wanted was to be noticed by her, all he wanted was to have a mother who treated her child like she was about to lose him everyday.

He brought her son back, helped spread a disease that nearly took the life on almost everyone on the planet, nearly tore the _whole world _in halfâ€|

And all he was met was this?

Not even a pat on the back?

Not even an _I love you_?

Kadaj didn't know when but Rikku's grip was gone, her fingers just touching his arms.

His eyes filled with tears, unshed tears that he held back for so long. His body shuddered, emotions running rampant throughout his body.

He choked on his breath.

"All I wantedâ€| Was t-to be a good sonâ€|"

He coughed, tears wetting the blanket.

"I did all she wanted and even brought back the son she loved mostâ€| But t-that's notâ€| Enough?"

He could still hear the soothing voice in his head.

"I never once got an 'I love you', all I wanted was to hear that but she doesn't even do that! I just wanted to be a better son, a better brother, but no!"

He wept into the sheets, raw emotion pouring out of him.

"She doesn't care, she just doesn't careâ€|"

She never did.

Kadaj didn't register what happened as Rikku got off and gently helped him sit up, tears falling down his chin. He felt a soft cushion against his head, scented oils meeting his nose.

Right now he didn't care that he was pressed against her chest, he didn't care that her lithe wrinkled fingers threaded his hair, he didn't care that she was mumbled something under her breath as she rested her chin on his head.

The strange warmth in his chest and the foreign feelings of comfort

oddly made him weep more.

"Maybe she didn't care at all. Maybe all she wanted was to see if you were faithful."

Those words oddly weighed in sympathy, _too much _sympathy.

"Mother is God in the eyes of a child."

* * *

><p>"Is there a reason you called me here or it because you just wanted to see me?"<p>

Cloud stood over the desk, looking aptly bored and somewhat bothered. His blonde hair was messy as usual and the usual black attire he wore was groomed and kept in place despite his trips to the desert.

Rufus Shinra was seated rather snugly behind his desk, his leg crossed over the other. His hair was neatly groomed, his pristine suit looked like it was recently folded and his skin was bursting with softness. He was sporting the same bored expression as Cloud, only a smirk was dancing on his lips.

Tseng was standing next to him, almost resembling the same status but something else was irking him inside.

"Why yes Cloud, of course we wanted to see you. We also have a few tasks at hand-

"Not interested."

"How about a few gils-"

"Not. Interested."

Cloud cut off Rufus the moment he brought up certain kinds of 'tasks'. Well of course he was going to deny, it was marvelously Cloud after all.

"I see. Well now that the offer is out of the wayâ€¦| Tseng, show him the pictures."

The Wutaian nodded, his expression blank and serious but Cloud could tell there was something else tugging at his sleeve.

"We monitor these camps around the desert because their people are the only ones who strangely have no effect on Mako, therefore they won't react when they touch Materia and Mako alike. They live near the mines and we pay them so they can trade with us."

Tseng watched Cloud skim over the pictures from the droid cameras. He swore he saw his eyes flicker at one particular photo.

The photo was black and white but it was obvious the teenager staring blankly to the side was Kadaj. His eyes seemed to glow despite how dark the photo was and the short shoulder length silver hair fell in front of his face, almost beautifully. Cloud expected him to be angry or smiling madly but he was just sitting there solemnly. As if he just gave up on life and had nothing else to live for, much less

do.

The people in front of the photo was working on something on the side, one of the guys had a full body suit and was bent over the hood of a machine that resembled an automobile but more advanced than they have now.

Children buried their hands in the sand, oblivious to the searing hot weather,

And all Kadj did was just sit there on a barrel and watch them.

The same miserable but gorgeous face was just so melancholic, Cloud actually felt his heart pulling strings.

"There's this one camp that's far from the reactors but they live under a Materia cave. And they're different from the rest of the camps, this one is Al Bhed. Do you know about them?"

The Turk knocked him back and tilted his head a little bit, almost like a child.

Cloud shook his head.

"Not really. Just read about them in books, didn't really know they existed."

"Then you know they can make machines much more stronger than ours? They can make robots, almost like real people but they have a whole new different system."

When he sensed Cloud wasn't paying attention, he sighed.

"The point is, it's no surprise that someone from the Lifestream can end up near one of these places. And this happened to beâ€|"

Tseng laid a finger on the picture that Cloud laid conveniently in front of Rufus.

"One of the remnants of Sephiroth. And the ringleader of them all, Kadj."

Cloud stared at the photo silently, frowning. It's not that one of the remnants of Sephiroth were back, Kadj just happened to pop out of the Lifestream but the fact that he seemed _different_.

The remnant was supposed to stand up and yell at everyone, shout at random kids and demand them where Mother was, throw a tantrum if no one knew and kill everyone in the camp out of anger.

But he was just _sitting thereâ€|_

"Cloud, we must have him here in two days. Who knows what he'll be doing during that."

Something tells me he won't be doing muchâ€|

"Alright."

The Turk's eyes shot open for a second out of surprise and Rufus just

hummed, uncrossing his legs.

"You'll do it?"

Tseng asked, his tone full of surprise.

Rufus rose a brow and looked up at the Wutaian, his eyes glimmered and for a second he saw them shift.

"I'll think about it."

Cloud muttered, feeling the atmosphere change drastically. He snatched the photo off of his desk and turned around to leave.

"What are you going to do once you have him?"

The blonde tilted his head to the side, his blue eyes locked on them.

"Well, we'll lock him up. Keep him away for good. We wouldn't want him to destroy the planet again, after all that we did to save her."

Cloud nodded, twisting the doorknob slowly. He couldn't help but feel something was off about them.

Maybe they just changed. They felt bad for what they did years ago that made the planet like this so they rebuilt.

Little did they know, they're just gonna do what the old Shinra did.

Cloud left the two men standing there behind the desk, Tseng averting his gaze and Rufus reaching for a cigarette.

* * *

><p>"Sir, are we really going to imprison Kadaj?"

The Turk looked at Rufus, completely overwhelmed.

It wasn't usual for a Turk to get _this _nervous but this was _Sephiroth's remnants _they were talking about.

Yazoo and Loz weren't a worry since they already proven faith and trust in the company but even then they were hanging their doubts on a thread.

The only reason Yazoo didn't put Rufus or Tseng's head on a pike was because they swore they wouldn't lay a finger on Loz. And even though he still mistrusted them, Loz was constantly surveillanced by Rude. So even if the two men wasn't doing their duty, the tan skinned Turk certainly was.

And to make sure that Yazoo wasn't planning on something, Reno was in charge of watching him. But even then there was still animosity between the two, even if it was very subtle. Something happened between the two, and it wasn't the fight in Midgar a year back.

But whenever the remnant was in trouble or his life was slowly ebbing

away, Reno was always there for him.

However now that they found out about Kadj suddenly appearing, they were going to act on one code they formed silently:

Family first.

"Tseng don't get so preoccupied with this, Yazoo and Loz will be away on a mission. And if Cloud brings him back while they're here, wellâ€¦"

He shrugged, lighting up the cigarette in his hand.

"They are human now. Jenova is gone from their bloodstream. They're easier than before to eliminate."

Eliminate?

"Sir, you can't beâ€¦"

The Wutaian didn't show it but he was deathly scared inside. He couldn't let the remnants die, they were still a valuable asset.

"We did pledge to not lay a finger on them both, right? That was when they were still powerful, the influence on the Lifestream was still in their veins. Now that they're fully human - _evident to what happened with Loz on his last mission_ - they can't do anything say weâ€¦ Break the promise."

The blonde was completely stoic when he explained, the cigarette still lit as he started signing papers.

Tseng swallowed thickly, a bead of sweat forming on his forehead.

As much as he tried so hard to deny it, he couldn't help but see his father taking over the President. All of the riches were now available to him, the world was repairing and people were getting happy.

It was only a matter of time before Rufus just took it all. Just like that _son of a bitch._

"Sir, you can't-"

"And who are you to tell me what I can and cannot do?"

Tseng himself was taken aback by the sudden remark, his eyes shooting open just for a little bit.

"Your shield, sir."

"And you are just a shield. Shields can't talk, they just cover. And they go wherever their master takes them. Now please, don't you have a task to do?"

He was shocked that the man would lash out, especially towards _him.

—

The Turk he entrusted his life upon.

The Turk that took a bullet for him.

The Turk that would still take bullets and bullets if it meant he would be safe.

Now all this wasted timeâ€|

"Of course. I apologize, sir."

He averted his gaze and clenched his fists, taking the clipboard off of the desk. He felt emotions racing, piling up, bursting in his body and the two words he uttered throughout all his life was justâ€|
Fading away. To the back of his mind, unable to hear anymore.

Calm downâ€|

The blonde stared down at the paper, the sound of writing on board stopped a while ago. Now it was just silence. The cigarette that he lit not too long ago was in the ashtray.

Tseng turned his back and for a split second hoped Rufus would beckon him over or at least mutter an apology.

But no. That's not what his father would've done.

"I'll be at my desk if you need me."

He swallowed, a lump in his throat as he turned his head.

Come on, say somethingâ€|

Nothing.

The Wutaian gripped the doorknob and opened the door a little bit too quick. He shut it, leaving a mirror image of the former president in the room.

He really hoped it but he swore he caught Rufus cover his face.

End
file.